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the service of Yahweh. Anyone of the heathen could say אֱלֹהִים, but only one who recognized the supremacy of Yahweh would call him אֲדֹנָי. At the same time the suffix lost its force, since the emphasis lay, not on a personal relation to God, but on his Lordship.

An examination of the later portion of Hebrew literature with respect to this suppression of the divine name exhibits some very remarkable results, and seems to warrant the inference that the movement began about the third century B. C., and became a complete fact a century later.

The fact itself was of deep significance as a preparation for Christianity, for with the introduction of the name אֲדֹנָי Israel's God began his triumphant march among the nations as the Lord of the world. It comes to us in the corresponding Greek form *κύριος*, the full significance of which passed over to him who at the close of the Old Covenant made God comprehensible to humanity, and in whom the fullness of the Godhead took living form. "The divine name Adonaj contains therefore germinally the final goal of all history, the union of a collected humanity under one head—Christ."

Such are the main results of this painstaking investigation of all the available facts bearing on the meaning and use of this divine name. Passing all minor criticisms, we are confident that in the main the author has successfully refuted the prevailing notion that the Jewish dread of pronouncing the name יְהוָה rests upon a mere mistranslation in the LXX, of Lev. xxiv. 16. The cause lies far deeper than this. It is traceable to that extraordinary degeneracy of the Mosaic religion into rabbinical Judaism which annihilated the free and lofty spirit of the Law beneath a grinding bondage of the latter.

PHILIP A. NORDELL.

SEMITIC RELIGION.*

The new book of Prof. W. Robertson Smith is one of the series of Burnett lectures. Three series are contemplated on the same subject, to-wit: The Primitive Religions of the Semitic Peoples viewed in relation to other ancient religions and to the spiritual religion of the Old Testament and of Christianity. The inquiry is a proper one. For the revelation of the Old Testament was built upon some sort of foundation already in existence, and it is quite certain that the first stones of this foundation were already laid when the Semites [why not *Shemites*?] existed as one people. That this primitive religion existed longest among the Arabs is altogether likely. To a certain extent the present book covers the same ground with Wellhausen's *Reste Arabischen Heidenthums*, to which indeed the author makes frequent reference. It covers broader ground than that book, however, and the criticism likely to be made is that the ground covered is too broad. In some portions the preliminary work is not yet done. The Assyrian and Babylonian religion is indeed excluded as having lost the primitive Semitic features.

The plan of the work is as follows: After an introductory chapter defining the subject and the method of inquiry the author takes up "The Nature of the

* LECTURES ON THE RELIGION OF THE SEMITES. First Series, the Fundamental Institutions. By W. Robertson Smith, M. A., LL. D., Fellow of Christ's College and Professor of Arabic in the University of Cambridge. Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1889 (xii and 488 pages).

Religious Community and the Relation of the Gods to their Worshipers"; he then considers the relation of the gods to natural things, holy places and objects including sanctuaries. With the sixth lecture we enter upon the consideration of *sacrifice* and this fills the remainder of the book—something over half the body of the book. An appendix gives some additional notes on points that could not be fully brought out in the lectures, and there is an index of Scripture passages as well as a general index.

The author's theory may be said to be that *totemism* is the earliest form of Semitic religion. The origin of sacrifice must be sought here. Not as though it were impossible for a rude nation to feast its god on animal food. This is recognized as a probable origin for the lower order of sacrifices as well as for the vegetable offerings found in the Hebrew liturgy. But the mere bringing of a present or providing the god with food will not account for the more solemn (as the author calls them *piacular*) sacrifices, which in the Law really overshadow the others. These must be explained in another way. In totemism now we find the idea of the kinship of the god [an animal] with his worshippers. Equally we find the individual animals represented as akin to both god and worshippers. A pastoral tribe is likely to worship the ox and to hold every individual ox or cow to be an embodiment of the divinity. The animal life is therefore on a par with the life of the clan or even more sacred. The life of a clansman can be lawfully taken only by the act of the whole clan. The life of the sacred bull can be taken only under the same restrictions. But on certain great festivals it may be taken in order to show the communion of the god and his people. In a lower stage of thought the conception is that the blood of the kin (its life) must be renewed by partaking of the common blood flowing in the veins of a kinsman—animal or human. Piacular sacrifices are sacramental sacrifices. The idea of the sacredness of certain things, however, culminates in the prohibition to touch them, as in the taboo of the South Sea islanders. This also was developed among the Semites until the piacular sacrifices were regarded as too sacred to be eaten even by the priests or by those engaged in the most solemn act of worship. Hence as in the ritual of the Day of Atonement, they must be sent away or burned without the camp.

The argument is illustrated and enforced with an immense array of examples drawn from all parts of the Semitic field. Yet the impression made upon the present reviewer is—"not proven." Two facts are apparently ignored which might throw light upon the discussion. One is the uncleanness [sacredness] of the dead in the Hebrew religion, emphasized by Stade in his History as the basis of that religion. The other is the sacredness of fire as possibly connected with the burning of offerings, and as certainly exemplified in the worship of the hearth in primitive society.

Perhaps it is hardly fair to judge the main argument until the promised second and third parts of the work appear. Even if it shall then be received with reserve, there can be no question that the work is full of instruction both for the general reader and for the Old Testament student. The old Arabic religion is presented to us more fully here than in any other single work even in German. Almost every page furnishes us with something of value. Especially striking is the evidence that we have got beyond Renan's "Semitic monotheism" as well as the "natural capacity of the Hebrews for religion" once so widely asserted. Professor Smith distinguishes very clearly between the natural religion of the Semites and the religion proclaimed by the prophets. In heathen religion "there is no

explanation of the god's change of mind," and the same is true of the natural religion of the Hebrews. "The mass of the Hebrews before the exile received with blank incredulity the prophetic teaching that Yahweh was ready to enforce his law of righteousness even by the destruction of the sinful commonwealth of Israel. To the prophets Yahweh's long-suffering meant the patience with which he offers repeated calls to repentance, and defers punishment while there is hope of amendment; but to the heathen and to the heathenly-minded in Israel the long-suffering of the gods meant a disposition to overlook the offences of their worshippers" (p. 62). The progress of heathenism is shown in another place to have widened the gulf between the deity and man without compensating benefit, but "the Hebrew ideal of a divine kingship that must one day draw all men to do it homage offered better things than these *not in virtue of any feature that it possessed in common with the Semitic religions as a whole*, but solely in virtue of its unique conception of Yahweh as a God whose love for his people was conditioned by a law of absolute righteousness" (p. 81, the italics are mine). As an example of the energy with which the author rejects certain current assertions note: "It is often said that the original Semitic conception of the godhead was abstract and transcendental; that while Aryan religion with its poetic mythology drew the gods down into the sphere of nature and of human life, Semitic religion always showed an opposite tendency, that it sought to remove the gods as far as possible from man, and even contained within itself from the first the seeds of an abstract deism. . . . All this is mere unfounded assumption." As to the oft-quoted *primus in orbe deos fecit timor* he says: "But however true it is that savage man feels himself to be environed by innumerable dangers which he does not understand, and so personifies as invisible or mysterious enemies of more than human power, it is not true that the attempt to appease these powers is the foundation of religion. From the earliest times religion as distinct from magic or sorcery addresses itself to kindred and friendly beings, who may indeed be angry with their people for a time, but are always placable except to the enemies of their worshippers or to renegade members of the community" (p. 55).

The interest of the book may be illustrated by these quotations which might be multiplied indefinitely. It is of course easy to put interrogation marks at many points. The author himself makes reservations and does not expect that his deductions will be received without question. But the book marks a distinct advance in the science of religions.

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